

REJECTION CRITERIA for VIRAL CULTURE SPECIMENS - Effective January 1, 2008

NOTE for all specimens submitted for Viral Culture:

Strict adherence to proper specimen collection, storage, and transport techniques are critical to successful viral isolation. Most specimens should be collected within 3 days of symptom onset and shipped refrigerated to arrive at KDHEL within 3 days of collection. Improper collection or packaging, delayed transport, and other factors can render viruses nonviable. A report of "Virus Not Found" cannot definitively rule out viral infection. SPECIMENS THAT ARE IMPROPERLY LABELED OR MISSING PATIENT IDENTIFICATION WILL NOT BE TESTED.

Viral Culture specimens received under the following conditions are subject to being rejected:

Description of Problem	Analyst Action(s)
No specimen label or ID; or improperly labeled	Reject and discard specimen. Report Unsatisfactory. Call submitter.
Specimen not enclosed	Call submitter. If no sample collected, report Unsatisfactory. If specimen delayed, hold form.
Specimen/inoculated cultures contaminated	Report Unsatisfactory.
CMV, VZV, or RSV request received frozen	Reject and discard specimen. Call submitter. Report Unsatisfactory.
CSF submitted for HSV culture	Report Unsatisfactory for HSV culture. Place specimen in long term storage.
Blood or Bone Marrow specimen received	Reject and discard specimen. Report Unsatisfactory (include comment that blood or bone marrow is no longer accepted for viral culture). Call submitter.
Expired VTM used	Attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Inappropriate specimen type or collection method. <i>Includes: Ca alginate, cotton/wooden swab; fixative; urine/CSF on swab/ or VTM</i>	Attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Specimen broken or leaked in transit	Attempt processing and isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Less than 2ml CSF or urine received	Q.S. sample to 2ml and attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, or report Unsatisfactory if virus not found ; include comment.
Received warm/no ice pack enclosed	Call submitter if no ice pack. Attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Urine received >24h past collection	Attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Specimen received more than 4 days past collection	Attempt isolation. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.
Specimen missing swab or tissue	Call submitter; Reject/discard if swab/tissue not included. Attempt isolation if submitter claims specimen OK. Report virus, if isolated, with comment. Report Unsatisfactory if virus not found.

Viral Culture specimens received under the following conditions are not rejected, but are not considered optimal:

Non-Reject Situations	Comments
Autopsy specimen collected more than 24 hours after death	Autopsy specimens should be collected with 24 hours of death, if possible.
Specimen collected more than 3 days past onset	Specimens collected within 3 days of symptom onset, if possible, to optimize viral recovery.
Date of onset unknown for VZV, Mumps, Measles, Influenza	Please include date of onset for VZV, Mumps, Measles, or Influenza requests.
Specimen received frozen, without dry ice	Specimens for viral culture should be sent cold, not frozen. Frozen specimens should be submitted with dry ice.